

Sample Syllabi

Sample II

Instructor: Justine M. Shaw, Ph.D.
Fall 2009

LS 112
3.0 units

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY CLASS SYLLABUS

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Course Description:

An introduction to cultural anthropology that offers students an understanding of modern human cultural variation. Students study the concept of culture and the methods and theories of both applied and academic cultural anthropologists, using professional case studies as examples. Topics include gender, subsistence, economic systems, political systems, marriage and the family, kinship, religion, the arts, ethnicity, and culture change.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students should achieve the following:

- 1) Explain the relationship of cultural anthropology to other subdisciplines of anthropology, as well as other social sciences.
- 2) Write logically, clearly, and analytically.
- 3) Analyze primary and secondary sources in order to extract information relevant to an issue of concern in cultural anthropology.
- 4) Apply anthropological concepts to real-world situations and problems, demonstrating an ability to process factual information using anthropological concepts.
- 5) Create their own arguments based upon anthropological concepts and data.
- 6) In class discussions, written work, and written examinations, exhibit the ability to think logically about issues in cultural anthropology and how people have interpreted those issues.
- 7) Sustain an argument through the use of evidence and logic in class discussions, essay exam questions, and term papers.

Themes:

- 1) Cultural relativism - Although cultures differ, they can not and should not be judged as better or worse than each other.
- 2) Culture change - All cultures have changed, and will continue to change.
- 3) Reflexive theory and personal bias - The presence of the anthropologist, along with his or her own cultural background, may influence the results of a given study.

Issues:

- 1) Diversity in cultures - There is tremendous variability in the beliefs, values, traditions, and practices of the cultures of the world. We should not expect others to follow our own culture's views.
- 2) Diversity in viewpoints - As each of us views the world from a slightly different perspective, our constructs of reality and attitudes about individual circumstances will vary.

Textbooks: The primary textbook for this class is *Essentials of Cultural Anthropology* by Garrick Bailey and James Peoples (ISBN#0-534-58626-0). Readings will also be assigned from *Katun: A Twenty-Year Journey with the Maya* by Cindy L. Hull (ISBN# 0-534-61290-3) and *The Cultural Experience: Ethnography in a Complex Society* by McCurdy, Spradley, and Shandy (ISBN# 1-57766-364-0). Additional readings may be announced in class and posted on Blackboard.

Reading: Readings will provide the basis for understanding the lectures and should be completed before coming to class. The "Reading List" page at the end of this syllabus contains the assignments for each week. Readings labeled as "B&P" are from Bailey and Peoples and should be read for the Monday of each week. Other readings labeled as "Hull" or "MSS" should be read for the Wednesday of each week.

Course Requirements:

Pop Quizzes	15%
Test 1	15%
Ethnography Project Proposal & Consent	10%
Ethnography Project Outline	5%
Test 2	15%
Ethnography Project	20%
Test 3	15%
Ethnography Presentation	5%

Letter grades for the course will be assigned according to the following:

90-93% = A-	94-100% = A	
80-83% = B-	84-86% = B	87-89% = B+
	70-76% = C	77-79% = C+
	60-69% = D	
	<60% = F	

Class Attendance and Makeups: In order to pass this course, you will need complete, well-organized lecture notes. Test questions will be taken from EACH lecture. While the readings will help to flesh out concepts covered in the lectures, they do not provide a substitution for class attendance. If you miss a lecture, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate - the instructor does not provide notes for absent students. There will be no makeups for any class assignments/ quizzes/ tests and no late papers will be accepted. All tests and quizzes must be taken in class and all papers must be turned in by the end of the class period during which they are due. If you have an unexcused absence for any assignment/ quiz/ test, you will receive a zero for that assignment/ quiz/ test, which will be averaged into your final grade. If you have a valid written excuse (family or medical) or have made prior arrangements with the instructor to excuse you, then the value of the assignment/ test you were excused from will be added to the weight of your third test. For instance, if you are excused from the first test (15%), then your third test will count for 30%, rather than the standard 15%. Making "prior arrangements" with the instructor requires hearing back from the instructor with a positive response prior to the time that the assignment is due/ test is to be taken, not just leaving a message.

Pop Quizzes: At least five pop quizzes will be given during the course of the semester. You will need to bring a scantron and pencil with you to class each day in order to be ready to take the quizzes.

Tests: Each of the three tests will cover approximately 1/3 of the course material (the first test will cover material since the start of the semester, the second test will cover material since the first test, and the third test will cover material since the second test). You will need to bring a scantron and pencil to take the objective portion of the tests, but you may write the essays on the test.

Ethnography Project: Each student is required to complete a written ethnography project with at least 8 pages of text each (longer projects are generally needed to adequately cover the required material), double-spaced, typed in a standard 12 point font (Arial or Times New Roman) with one inch margins. A **project proposal** including a customized and signed **consent form** (see p. 31-32 MSS) and a **project outline** are required parts of the project (see "Reading List" for assignment dates and deadlines).

Special accommodations: College of the Redwoods complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request at least one week **before** the first test so that necessary arrangements can be made. No last-minute arrangements or post-test adjustments will be made. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability related services and may need accommodations, please see me or contact Disabled Student Programs and Services.

Academic Misconduct: Cheating, plagiarism, collusion, abuse of resource materials, computer misuse, fabrication or falsification, multiple submissions, complicity in academic misconduct, and/ or bearing false witness will not be tolerated. Violations will be dealt with according to the procedures and sanctions proscribed by the College of the Redwoods. Students caught plagiarizing or cheating on exams will receive an "F" in the course.

The student code of conduct is available on the College of the Redwoods website at:
<http://www.redwoods.edu/District/Board/New/Chapter5/Ap5500.pdf>

If you're unsure how to cite a source for one of your projects, check out the CR library's web page style guides for MLA (<http://www.redwoods.edu/eureka/library/pdf/MLACITEFORMAT3.pdf>) or APA (<http://www.redwoods.edu/eureka/library/pdf/APACITEFORMAT3.pdf>).

ANTH 3 - CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
READING LIST

WEEK OF	TOPIC	TO READ BEFORE CLASS
8/24	Definition of Cultural Anthropology; Begin Anthropological Methods	B&P Ch. 1 and 14 MSS Ch. 1 and 2
8/31	Anthropological Methods	B&P Ch. 2 and 4 MSS Ch. 3
9/7	9/7 – Labor Day – no class Anthropological Theory	
9/14	Race and Ethnicity	MSS Ch. 4 and 5
9/21	Language and Culture 9/21 - Ethnography Project Proposal & Consent Form Due	B&P Ch. 3 MSS Ch. 6
9/28	9/28 – First Test	Hull pp.xi-36
10/5	Political Systems	Hull pp. 37-86
10/12	Subsistence and Economic Systems 10/14 - Ethnography Project Outline Due	Hull pp. 87-124
10/19	Gender	B&P Ch. 9 Hull pp. 125-177
10/26	10/26 – Second Test	MSS Ch. 7 and 8
11/2	Marriage and Family	B&P Ch. 7 MSS Ch. 9
11/9	11/11 – Veterans’ Day – No Class Kinship	B&P Ch. 8
11/16	Religion and the Arts	B&P Ch. 11 and 12 MSS Ch. 10
11/23	Culture Change and the Future 11/23 - Complete Ethnography Project Due	B&P Ch. 13
11/30	11/30 - Third Test 12/2 - Ethnography Presentations	
	Ethnography Presentations during official Final Exam Day and Time	

Note: I intend to promote an environment in this class in which all people are treated with dignity and respect. During the course of the semester, we may consider subjects with political and/ or ethical implications. Your tests, projects, and class participation will not be evaluated based upon the opinion that you express about these issues. Instead, your grade will relate to your ability to analytically approach these issues and bring related anthropological materials to support your argument.

The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise sections of this course or syllabus. Changes will be announced in class.

ETHNOGRAPHY PROJECT

As you have already learned, cultural anthropologists use **participant observation** to study the culture of living groups. A researcher will live, eat, speak, and practice the customs of the group that he/ she is studying. This enables him/ her to learn about a culture by learning how to behave acceptably in the society. When cultural anthropologists have questions or need an explanation, they frequently ask **consultants** from within the culture/ subculture they are studying.

For your ethnography project, you will use participant observation and at least one consultant(s) to learn about a group unfamiliar to you (a group that you are not/ have not ever been a part of). You must interact with a group of people as a part of this experience, not just one or two people from the culture. This might involve doing things like attending a religious service or ceremony you have never been to before, going to a friend's workplace to work and hang out with her/ his co-workers, or actively taking part in a music/ art events outside your own culture (not just watching them). You, the cultural anthropologist, will take notes to record your experience. You will also visually record your observations through drawings, maps, or photographs - this might be something as simple as sketching a vegetable you've never seen before, drawing a map of a church with symbols and arrows to show the flow of the ceremony, or photographing your key consultant(s). You will also construct at least one taxonomy (see MSS Ch. 5) as part of your ethnography.

Note that you will be required to turn in a **project proposal** and **project outline prior**. The proposal should be in the format described on p.31 of MSS; your proposal should also contain a customized and signed copy of the consent form on p.31-32. The project outline should be at least one page long and done in an outline format. Look here for instructions on how to construct an outline:

(http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/brainstorm_outline.htm). Refer to MSS p. 87-90 for suggestions on how to structure your paper. See the reading list for due dates for paper components.

Although it is not required, you may use library or Internet sources to also help clarify things or provide additional information. If you do so, you must cite them within the text and provide a separate list of references cited (MLA or other standard style) at the end of your paper. Any ideas, information, terms, or quotes obtained from an outside source (brochure, lecture, book, course textbook, Internet, article, etc.) must be cited in the text and a complete citation should be provided in a "references cited" section. The library's reserve section has an MLA style manual to demonstrate proper citation formats (also see your textbook for examples). Failure to provide these citations is plagiarism and will result in failure in the course.

You will turn in an anthropological analysis of your experience that is at least 8 pages long (typed in Times New Roman or Arial font, double-spaced, 12-point font, one inch margins) with at least one form of visual documentation (labeled to show its relevance to the paper). Additionally, you will turn in your notes (handwritten OK). Your required title page (with your name, class, and title), notes, visual documentation, taxonomy, and any references you cite will NOT count towards this 8-page minimum. To fulfill all of the requirements in only 8 pages, you will have to write very concisely - if you want to turn in a longer paper to be sure that you cover all of the required aspects of the Project, that's fine. Remember, many students do require longer than the 8-page minimum to adequately cover the requirements of the Project - it is quite unlikely that doing just the "minimum" will result in anything higher than an average grade (C) on the paper.

If you are unsure about how to find an experience to participate in, what information you need to record, how to write up your work, or anything else, be sure to ASK! This assignment is not one that can be successfully accomplished by starting the night before it is due.

Cultural Anthropology
Ethnography Project: Grading Strategy

Your project will be graded according to the following ten categories, each valued at ten points. Your success in each category will be evaluated relative to your classmates - so several people will receive a ten in each category.

- _____ grammar, punctuation, and spelling
(addl. comments)_____
- _____ flow, readability, intelligibility

- _____ included at least one taxonomy relevant to the project

- _____ notes discussing experience and visual documentation

- _____ selected a culture to study; interacted with a group from the culture (>2 people);
(this will involve explaining why the group constitutes a culture/ subculture)

- _____ discussed use of least one consultant to answer questions/ provide explanations

- _____ described active participation & observation in some experience in some detail

- _____ attempted to interpret/ understand experience in terms of culture/ subculture studied
(explaining symbolism of actions/ art etc.) to demonstrate some type of inside knowledge
gained through the experience (not just interpreting from an ethnocentric point of view)

- _____ applying relevant class terms and concepts

- _____ taking analysis of project info to "another level" based upon class or other anthropological
materials (*i.e.* discussion of how participant observation provided unique info, comparing to
other cultures discussed in class...)

ANTH 3: Cultural Anthropology
Review Sheet for Tests

Each of the three tests will consist of 40 objective questions (such as matching, multiple choice, and true/false questions) worth 2 points each and two short essay questions worth 10 points each. Test 1 will cover material from the start of the class until Test 1. Test 2 will cover material from Test 1 until Test 2. Test 3 will cover material from Test 2 until Test 3. You need to bring a scantron in order to take the test. Neither the instructor nor College of the Redwoods will provide scantrons. Students without scantrons may NOT take the test.

To study for the tests, I suggest that you do the following:

- ✓ Go through each chapter of Bailey and Peoples assigned for the test (see your syllabus for chapter numbers), noting all the terms and names in **bold**, which are also listed at the end of the chapter in the "key terms" section. Make a list of these with a short definition for each. (Remember, to keep the exam reasonably short, I'm going to boil most definitions down to one sentence.) Writing these out will help to you memorize them. While you will not have to write out any definitions on the exam, you will have to know them well enough to select the definition from a list of possibilities or write "false" for an incorrect definition. Be sure to note the differences between superficially similar terms.
- ✓ Read through the "Summary" at the end of each chapter to help you decide what information from the chapter is most important.
- ✓ Go through your notes, noting the terms that are repeated in class and in your reading. These terms are considered by your instructor to be more important than terms not mentioned in class and are therefore more likely to be on the exam. Terms in the book that are not mentioned in class are less likely to be on the exam, but may still appear in very low frequencies. Some terms may be brought up by your instructor that are not in the book – these are also important to know.
- ✓ Like terms, the cases/ specific examples given in class are going to be stressed over materials never mentioned in class. The instructor won't test over examples covered in the book that are never mentioned in class.
- ✓ Review the relevant chapters of McCurdy, Spradley, and Shandy that have been read during the third of the class that pertains to the test that you are studying for. Be sure to pay particular attention to the italicized terms and phrases, as well as content that is emphasized by your instructor in class.
- ✓ For Test 2, review the questions concerning your Hull ethnography that were provided in class, trying to answer these questions with concrete information from the books and your notes. Exam questions on these readings will stress the findings, the relevance of the research to anthropology, and some of the methods used. Questions will not focus on the life histories of individuals in the text – don't try to memorize family trees or names of consultants – look at generalized behaviors and tendencies described for the culture (the sorts of things discussed in class).

(keep going...)

Answering the following questions as completely as possible will also help you review much (not all) of the materials related to the content of your main textbook (B&P). Note hints on the prior page to study for content from your other readings.

For Test 1:

- ✓ What is anthropology? What are each of the subdisciplines?
- ✓ What ethical priorities must anthropologists consider?
- ✓ What types of methods are used by cultural anthropologists to gain information about cultures? What challenges/ conflicts to anthropologists face in designing and carrying out research?
- ✓ What are some of the major theoretical outlooks in anthropology? What anthropologists are associated with some of these outlooks? What general perspective does each approach take?
- ✓ What are the differences between race and ethnicity?
- ✓ What are social races? Why is "race" no longer a valid concept for most anthropologists?
- ✓ How does human language differ from other forms of communication?
- ✓ How do linguists explore the roots of language?
- ✓ How is language described?
- ✓ What is the relationship between language and culture? What is the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis?

For Test 2:

- ✓ Who are the Yucatec Maya? What terms discussed in class or from your book apply to them? (ALSO - be sure to review questions discussed in class.)
- ✓ What are the four main types of political systems according to Service's typology? What cultural characteristics tend to be associated with each? Name an example(s) of each given in class.
- ✓ How is social stratification defined by anthropologists? What are "egalitarian" societies?
- ✓ What are the four primary subsistence strategies? What cultural characteristics tend to be associated with each? Name an example(s) of each given in class.
- ✓ What are the three primary means of distribution and exchange? What types of reciprocity to anthropologists distinguish?
- ✓ What is the difference between sex and gender?
- ✓ What is gender stratification?

For Test 3:

- ✓ What is marriage? How does it vary?
- ✓ What is endogamy? Exogamy?
- ✓ What are some economic transactions that may accompany marriage?
- ✓ What is the Universal Incest Taboo?
- ✓ How is family defined? What are some family forms? What are the advantages/ disadvantages of each form?
- ✓ What are the various types of residence patterns described by anthropologists?
- ✓ What is the difference between unilineal and bilateral descent? Describe the various types of unilineal descent systems and groups. What functions do these serve?
- ✓ What are the basic types of kinship terminology systems? What types of families or descent groups are each associated with?
- ✓ Why do humans seem to need some sort of religion?
- ✓ What are some examples of religious practices?
- ✓ How has religion been affected by culture change?
- ✓ How do anthropologists study art?
- ✓ What is the world system? How are modern cultures linked? How have we arrived at our present world system?
- ✓ What is an intervention philosophy? How does it relate to development programs?

- ✓ What are some of the mechanisms of culture change and exchange? How does each differ? How do cultures resist and survive domination?
- ✓ What is applied anthropology? Medical anthropology?
- ✓ What types of problems do applied anthropologists address? What ethics/ responsibilities are associated with doing applied, vs. academic, anthropology?

I recommend that you save all of your study information to help you review this material in case you choose (or are obligated to take) the comprehensive final.